THE

EVIDENCE;

OR,

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RELIGION AND MORALITY ARE THE BASIS OF HUMAN FELICITY.

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Christ's treatment of his followers a rule for them in their treatment of one another.

THE gospel of Jesus Christ is both doctrinal and practical. While the doctrines revealed are to govern our faith, the duties enjoined are to command our obedience. Both are alike binding and equally essential to the christian character. Practical religion is a uniform expression of an obedient heart to the rules of duty as stated in the scriptures. There duties, though of the same nature, vary accordingly to the several objects to which they have an immediate respect.

THE performance of our duty to God is worship. Our duty to man, is the fulfilment of social obligation, and when done to ourselves, it is keeping our hearts and actions in subordination to that law, which if obeyed will yield the greatest sum of felicity.

THE injunction of the Apostle Paul in Rom. 15, 7, is to christians. His words are these. Wherefore recieve ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God. That all the real friends of Christ are alike respected in this precept, none will dispute. The duty enjoined is simple. It is neither less nor more than that christians receive one another as Christ received them. If therefore we can in the light of divine truth, ascertain how Christ receives us, provided we are christians, then the point will be settled, how we are to receive those who carry with them the marks of our dying Lord.

THAT we might have clear conceptions of this practical and interesting subject, I shall attempt to shew how Christ receives his friends. All true christians are members of Christ's mystical body. He receives them into the most endearing and intimate communion with himself. Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular. Christ sets them as a seal on his heart. He invites his friends to come to him, that where he is, there they may be also. He calls himself the vine and his people the branches. Christ addresses his disciples in these words. "If any man love me, he will keep my words; and my father will love him, and we will come unto him and take up our abode with him. I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you." Christ tells us he is one with his followers.

WHEN Christ was on earth, he always received his friends to communion with himself. At a certain time some of his disciples saw one casting out devils and forbad him. Christ said forbid him not.

If Christ were now on earth there is no question how he would conduct towards his followers. He would receive them alike to his holy supper. He would look on them with the tenderest affection and address them with all the kindness of a father. Far would he be from receiving some and rejecting others. All his regenerate sons and daughters of every denomination would partake of the symbols of his dying love at his hand. This is certain from the dispositions he manifested when in the world.

Jesus Christ would receive all his friends to his communion notwithstanding all their imperfections and frailties. Regeneration is the commencement of holiness in the soul. But after this saving change is wrought, great imperfection still remains. In all christians there is a warfare between sin and holiness. The flesh lusteth against the spirit & the spirit againt the flesh and these are contrary, the one to the other so that Christ's true followers come exceedingly short of absolute perfection in this life. God looks on their sins with entire disapprobation, yet as he has begun a work of grace in their hearts, which he means shall result in the perfection of holiness, he receives them into a most endearing communion with himself. The man who has the least spark of holy love is delivered from the curse of final condemnation. Jesus will feed the grace of his own implanting. He will keep up the pulse of spiritual life. The bruised "reed will he not break nor quench the smoking flax until he bring forth judgment unto victory." Though they are sinful and in themselves unworthy, yet he feeds them from all the sources of his heavenly treasure, till they shall grow up to the stature of his fulness.

Jesus Christ receives his friends with the universal approbation of all holy beings in the universe. Each returning penitent whatever be the name he bears, or from whatever remote quarter of the globe, up to the very first act of penitential relenting, is received into communion with Christ to the unspeakable rejoicing of all heaven. However contracted men may be by party feelings, the sons of light are not straightened. They behold their Lord in communion with every subsubject of his regenerating grace.

If there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, then all saints and angels are delighted with Christ in all the objects of his complacential love. All true christians are the purchase of Christ's redemption. They are dear to him as the apple of his eye. Of course those who are round about him and are with him in sentiment and affection, glorify him on this account.

It is not only scriptural but reasonable, that Christ should thus receive his friends to his kind embrace. We may know it is scriptural that every christian is owned by him. Each saint is an heir of his kingdom, and in his mind from eternity to rescue from ruin. For each saint did the saviour bleed and die. The feeblest worshipper is a joint heir with him to an incorruptible inheritiance, and why then, should one believer be shut from his communion? Far was it from Christ when on earth to overlook a single friend of his or keep so much as one at a distance. The gentiles in the time of Christ were treated as outcasts from God. They were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenant of promise. There were, however, a few gentile believers, and with what reception did they meet from our Lord? Did they find him indifferent to their

exigencies." Was he ever unwilling to administer to their consolation and shew himself their benefactor in his attachment to them above all the sons of Men? The Centurion was an outcast gentile, but did Christ disdain to enter fully into his circumstances, and grant him all his request? The poor woman of Syrophenicia, found in Christ all that her soul desired. Christ's disciples marvelled at his intimacy with the Samaritan believers. They rebuked the blind man by the way side; but did Christ pass him by unnoticed? Lay all the light of God's word together, and can you find one christian with whom you dare intimate he did not commune? To each saint he manifests himself not as he does unto the world. All Christ's friends are united to him by ties of inexpressible endearment. The souls he has purchased, he will not deny the nearest approach to himself. He invites them to behold more of his glory, to come nearer to him, to feast upon the bounties of his love. The language of the condesending saviour is, "Eat O friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved."

We have now seen how Christ receives his friends. And that he holds communion with all his renewed children, I trust we can have no doubt. If language can communicate ideas, we have an assurance that Christ's communion with his people, is inexpressibly endearing.

I shall now shew that Christ's example in this matter is an unerring rule for us. If Jesus Christ is not a rule for us in our communion with his people, where shall we find a law to govern us; to whom else shall we repair, on whom else can we rely in this matter? Is he not the Lord and judge of his people, and is any man to be so highly appreciated by us as to rob him of his right of control in a matter of such high magnitude? That you may be convinced I have laid no forced construction on words, you will be pleased to notice the preceding verses introducing them.

The Apostle commences the chapter in these words. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves. Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good to edification." These verses evidently lead to the sentiment communicated. We are to receive to our fellowship, those who on the whole give evidence of religion, tho' they may not see with us in every minute particular. We are to exercise christian forbearance, with those who see differently from us in the minor points of theology. That which is merely external should never be allowed to interrupt the communion of God's people. This is evidently the Apostles idea, from what he farther observes. Now the God of grace and consolation, grant you to be like minded one towards another according to Christ Jesus. As Christ is of the same feelings towards all his people, so christians are to be influenced by the same ardent affection one towards another. The Apostle adds, "That ye may with one mind, and one mouth glorify God, the father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Paul was especially an Apostle to the gentiles, yet this epistle to the Romans was directed to Jews residing in the imperial city. This ancient covenant people retained stronge prejudices against gentile converts. The object of the Apostle in this practical part of his epistle is to do away those prejudices and constrain the Jews to recieve and commune with Gentiles as with one another. And to simplify his idea that they should

not misapprehend him he directs them, "Receive ye one another as Christ also received us to the glory of God."

To the Corinthian and Galatian believers he writes to the same purport, tho' in words a little different. To the former he speaks in these words, "For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many are one body, so also is Christ, and whether one member suffer all the members suffer with it, or one member be honored all the members rejoice with it." To the Galatians he uses these words, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

To receive to our fellowship and communion those who give no evidence of union with Christ by faith, is not required, but condemned. This would be opening the door to the enemy, and letting in the wolf to devour the lambs of the flock. In friendship to Christ, we are bound to be guarded on this point. As he expressly tells us that those who are not for him are against him, it would be treachery to his cause, to use our influence to prevail on those who exhibit no evidence of love to the redeemer, to unite themselves to his family. A church made up of the unregenerate and carnally minded, will never submit to christian discipline and order, will never maintain the laws of Christ's house, and exhibit an example suited to convict & reclaim the ungodly. To guide us in this matter we have an unerring rule. We are to fix our eye on Jesus and be guided by him. We are to receive to our communion as he receives to his. As Christ is omnicient, and we finite, an important distinction is to be observed. Christ is not liable to be deceived "He knows them that are his." For us to pretend to such knowledge would be the height of presumption. In receiving others to our communion we are carefully to notice the marks of discipleship as stated in God's word, and to admit them on visible testimony. If there be visible evidence, that a man is in saving union with our Lord Jesus Christ, the way for us to act is as clear as God meant to have it. It may be said, the most discerning christians are liable to be deceived; they are exposed to misplace their confidence—be it so, Christ never meant to commit the final judgment to his creatures. If they observe the rules he has given them with watchfulness and prayer, he will never impeach them because of the imposition of the hypocritical and designing. Those who have set themselves up as unerring decerners of men's hearts, have always proved, that they knew not their own. Such are wise in their own conceits and know nothing yet as they ought to know. If a man is desirous of communion with us, and gives evidence of real piety, we are in all cases to receive him. This is the rule Christ has bequeathed to us, and which it becomes us to hold inviolate. But how are the different denominations of christians to conduct in this matter? If this is to be holden out as an infalible maxim established by God, what will become of those regulations, many of the professing world, have incorporated into the rules of church order? Why, if they are in contrariety to the authority of Christ Jesus, let them be sacrificed—let them be obliterated as no longer bending, and not be suffered henceforth to shackle God's people to their

unspeakable detriment. I confess to you my breathren, it is with some degree of self denial, I have undertaken to address you on this practical and very interesting subject. I felt that the observations might cross the line marked out by some, we are to respect for their christian virtues. But we are bound to call no man father on earth, and to speak for God, tho' a host rise up against us. In so plain a case as this, tho' even in this, I would not be too confident, yet am strongly persuaded, we are to stand in readiness to commune with the visible followers of our Lord, at his table and that this duty is solemnly binding on all God's people throughout the world. And what to my mind makes this sentiment undeniably correct, is the concurrence of scripture statements, some of which I have brought to your remembrance. If we set ourselves up, and make a rule, to debar from our communion all who would not accord with us in every external minutia, what should we do but declare our infallibility and fasten the yoke of execration on all not within our particular pale. Should we undertake thus to act, where could any man under heaven look for our christian forbearance? If he should seek it, would he find it, should we have any? Should we rear up such a hierarchy we might say to those around, who were longing for union with us. We will commune with you, but you must come in at the door, what door, if he is in Christ. is he not already received? and is it not my duty to receive him, as a fellow member, in the mystical body of our common Lord?

The separating walls, between the lovers of soul-humbling truth, were never erected by Jesus nor his order. They are a structure of human invention. They are like the fencing round about Jericho, let the truth of God touch them, and they fall. Yea they begin to jostle. The saints of the most high are drawing nearer and nearer to each other's embrace. The time is coming, when they shall enter the house of our God with one heart. It is in vain for men to contest this plain, and blessed principle. The hosts of heaven are waiting to see, all the family of God on earth, in union with one another, as they are with Christ to the glory of God.

E.

Explanation of Scriptural Types.

THE BURNING BUSH TYPICAL.

Of the wonderful phenomena, which have astonished the world, few have exceeded the prodigy which was exhibited to Moses, in the wilderness of Sinai. We have an account of it, Exod. iii. 2, 3. And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush: and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burned. In this extraordinary appearance, are not the following evangelical subjects typically represented? Was not the fire, that pure, that subtle, and penetrating element, selected on this occasion, designed to represent the purity and spirituality of that God who is a consuming fire?—More particularly, did this flame of fire in the bush, especially represent,

1. The divine nature dwelling in the man Christ Jesus? Very significantly is the nature of man represented by a bush, slender, feeble and incapable of resistance. For this reason the human nature of our divine Redeemer is termed, a root

out of dray ground, Isa. iii. 2. a stem out of the rod of Jesse, a (righteous) branch out of his roots, xi. 1. and a tender plant, but a plant of renown, Ezek. 29. So frequently, in the holy scriptures, is the Deity exhibited by the figure of fire, to denote his spirituality, and purity, and the terrible effects of his indignation, the fire of his jealousy, which consumeth his enemies round about.

WHAT a glowing type was the flame of fire in the bush, of the fulness of the godhead dwelling bodily in the person of our glorious Immanual? Was the bush burning in fire, to Moses, a most surprising phenomenon? and is not the union of the divine and human nature, in our blessed Redeemer, a spectacle far more wonderful to angels and to men? If Moses turned aside to see this great sight, should not we divest ourselves of other objects, that in solemn meditation, we may contemplate and admire the glorious mystery of godlines, *God manifest in the flesh?* If Moses wondered that the bush burned, and yet was not consumed, shall we not be filled with equal, nay, greater astonishment, that this frail nature of man, in the person of Jesus Christ, is not dissolved by the perpetual residence of the uncreated and eternal *Jehovah* in it?

2. HATH it not been supposed, with good reason, that the burning bush was a striking similitude of the oppressed and afflicted Israelites under their cruel bondage in Egypt, from which they were brought forth as from a fiery furnace, and of the church of Christ in all ages? Which for the imbecility of it is termed, a *bruised reed* and *smoaked flax*, and its members *trees* of rightousness, the *planting* of the Lord, the rod of his inheritance. Doth not the flame of fire in the bush, aptly represent those fiery trials by which it hath been tried and purified? the fire of dissension within, and the flame of persecution without? Did the bush in the fire go near to destruction; and hath not the church, in her trials, gone near to execution?—How perilous its situation, when it floated in the ark on the boisterous surface of the mighty deep? When in the furnace of affliction in Egypt? In the persecution of Antiochus, who swore in wrath, that he would make Jerusalem the common burying ground of the Jews, and blot out their name from under heaven? When persecuted by Herod and the Jews? By the great red dragon, and the man of sin, who hath worn out the saints of the Most High How similar and often hath been its condition to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in Nebuchadnezar's fiery furnace? But the bush which burned was not consumes for the *Lord* was in it. And the church hath uot perished, *the gates of hell have not prevailed against her*, because God hath been her refuge and strength, a present help in trouble. In all her afflictions, the angel of his presence hath saved her. When on the verge of destruction, God hath helped her, and that right early. She may now adopt her ancient expressions, and say, Many a time have they afflicted me from my youth; yet have they not prevailed against me; (Psa. cxxix.) and the exulting language of the Psalmist (Psa. cxxiv.) If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when men rose up against us, then they had swallowed us up quick. Blessed be the Lord who hath not given us a prey to their teeth, Let Israel hope in the Lord, from henceforth, and for ever, Amen.

Evan. Mag.

Awful providence of God !

We are under the painful necessity of announcing to the public, an event the most awful and overwhelming, this or any other part of our country has ever witnessed !

Our hand trembles, our lips quiver, our hearts bleed within us in giving the painful detail, and our readers will water the column with their tears, in the perusal !

On the night of the 28th Jan. between the hours of 12 & 1 o'clock, the house of Daniel Sayre,* one of the judges of the court in this county, took fire and in a few minutes was consumed to ashes. This awful disaster, must, from the circumstances, have proceeded from a spark falling into a trunk of linen or cotton, from a candle which was carried by a child into a back chamber, sometime in the course of the evening.

The judge had been absent during the day, came home about the hour of usual bed-time, and the family retired to rest not far from eleven o'clock. The hour of retiring being some later than usual, and the judge himself weary, they all soon dropped into a sound fleep. The whole family consited of the father and mother and eight children, the eldest son being absent. The judge and his lady and the eldest and youngest daughters were below, two sons and three daughters were above stairs. After they had all fallen asleep, and lain not to exceed an hour and a quarter, lamentable to relate ! the eldest of the two boys was waked by the heat and suffocation of smoke, and found the house wrapped in flames.—He cried to his little brother and sisters, who alas ! made him no answer, and instantly pressed through the scorching heat to the stairs, ran down exclaiming in awful consternation, and awoke those below. They arose in unutterable surprise, and the father in an agony for the fate of the children above, rushed with the utmost ardor to the stairs, he ascended, but he was met and beaten back by the fire. Wrung with the most excruciating solicitude for those dearer to him than life, three times he renewed the effort to penetrate the flames if possible, to rescue his children from the devouring element. The neighbors by this time had reached the house, and pressed with combined resolution toward the children. The last attempt was as fruitless as the former, and in this the father must have perished had he not been pulled back by those behind him. The mother and two daughters below by this time had fled, barefoot and with scarce a covering, the night being piercingly cold, & the icy nubs sharp like glass. Add to this the mothers situation !——But this was comparatively light. The loss of property, their own personal sufferings, had not even a place in their thoughts, in this direful moment. What imagination can conceive, or tongue express the poignancy of anguish, that four lovely children all between the ages of fifteen and six years old, were in the midst of the fire, and consuming to ashes.—At this sight, the stout hearted were melted into weakness, and men united by no ties of consanguinity, on the recollection, were prostrated with grief, and vented their tears without control.

The few remains were gathered up next morning, and all put in one coffin. On the sabbath they were carried into the meeting house, where a vast assembly were collected to witness the dreadful spectacle. A discourse was delivered on the occasion from these words ; " *Thy judgments are a great deep.*" The

oldest men, and those who had been conversant with the field of action and garments rolled in blood stood still at the sight, and confessed that it combined more to move and break the heart, than any other their eyes ever beheld. We are happy to relate, that the parents, are able to stand up and testify for God that he is good. Blessed be the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that such consolation is theirs. A more exalted, and Godlike image is not seen, than a good man praising God, when under the heavy strokes of his chastising hand.

A.

* *Canton.*

The folly of boasting of tomorrow.

Boast not thyself of days to come,
To morrow is not thine;
The grave e'er long will be thy home,
Thou dust and warms must join,

Kindred and friends before are gone,
Beneath the turf they lie:
Know, thou must follow them anon,
Know, mortal, thou must die,

Vain are the projects creatures form,
Absort in earthly cares:
Unlook'd for comes the pelting storm,
That blasts, their future years.

Life is a tale that's quickly told,
A glass that's quickly run:
Death comes life's strings no longer hold
The little tale is done.

MORNING HYMN

In sleep's serene oblivion laid,
safely pass'd the silent night;
At once I see the breaking shade,
And drink again the morning light.

New born—I bless the waking hour,
Once more, with awe, rejoice to *be*;
My conscious soul resumes her power,
And springs, my gracious God, to Thee

O guide me through the various maze
My doubtful feet are doom'd to tread:
And spread thy shield's protecting blaze,
When dangers press around my head.

A *deeper shade* will soon impend,,
A *deeper sleep* my eyes oppress;
Yet still thy strength shall me defend,
Thy goodness still shall deia to bless

That *deeper shade* shall fade away,
That *deeper sleep* shall leave my eyes?
Thy *light* shall give eternal day!
Thy *love*, the rapture of the skies!

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